

Ask



LOCAL HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE

SHIP

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Q: I'm hearing about so many changes coming to healthcare because of the Affordable Care Act. I have Medicare. Which changes will affect me, and when will they begin?

A: You may notice some changes right away. These may include:

A \$250 Rebate Check

Those who reach the "donut hole", the difference of the initial coverage limit and the catastrophic coverage threshold, as described in the Medicare Part D prescription drug program, will receive a one-time \$250 rebate check. This does not apply for those receiving Extra Help. These checks will begin mailing in mid-June, and will continue monthly throughout the year as beneficiaries enter the coverage gap. In 2011, if you reach the coverage gap, you will receive a 50% discount when buying Part D-covered brand-name prescription drugs. Over the next ten years, you will receive additional savings until the coverage gap is closed in 2020.

More Preventive Care Services at No Cost

In 2011, you can get free preventive care services like colorectal cancer screening and mammograms. You can also get a free annual physical.

Improvements to Medicare Advantage

Today, Medicare pays Medicare Advantage insurance companies over \$1,000 more per person on average than Original Medicare. New efforts will be made to reduce payment errors, waste, fraud, and abuse to make Medicare more efficient and return savings to the Trust Fund to strengthen Medicare in the future. If you are in a Medicare Advantage plan, you will still receive guaranteed Medicare benefits.

Beginning in 2014, the new law protects Medicare Advantage members by taking strong steps to ensure that at least 85% of every dollar these plans receive is spent on health care.

You are an important resource in the fight against fraud. If you notice possible fraud, report it to 1-800-MEDICARE.

Further Down the Road

- In 2018, seniors can expect to save on average almost \$200 per year in premiums and over \$200 per year in co-insurance compared to what

they might have paid without the new law.

- Over the next 20 years, Medicare spending will continue to grow, but at a slightly lower rate as a result of reducing waste, fraud, and abuse.
- Upper-income beneficiaries (\$85,000 of annual income for individuals or \$170,000 for married couples filing jointly) can expect to pay higher premiums.

You may notice other changes outside of Medicare as well. These may include:

- Improvements to long-term care choices
- Help for early retirees
- Coverage for people with pre-existing conditions
- Expanding coverage for young people through their parents' insurance.

If you would like more information about Medicare, Medicaid, or health insurance, call SHIP for help at 1-800-452-4800, TTY 1-866-846-0139 or online at www.medicare.in.gov.

SHIP is a free, unbiased counseling program provided by the Indiana State Department of Insurance. To schedule an appointment with SHIP, call 1-800-452-4800, TTY 1-866-846-0139 or visit www.Medicare.IN.gov to find your local site.